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URARTU'S IMPACT ON ACHAEMENID AND PRE-ACHAEMENID ARCHITECTURE IN IRAN

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It has long been recognized that there are intriguing common features in Urartian architecture and Achaemenid Persian architecture. Many years ago Herzfeld already used the evidence of a small bronze model of a three-storied structure from the region of Van (Fig. 21.01) to suggest that the prototype for the distinctive form of the almost identical stone towers with three rows of blind windows at Pasargadae and Naqsh-i Rustam could well have come from Urartu (Herzfeld 1935: 35-36; 1941: 214 with fig. 324).

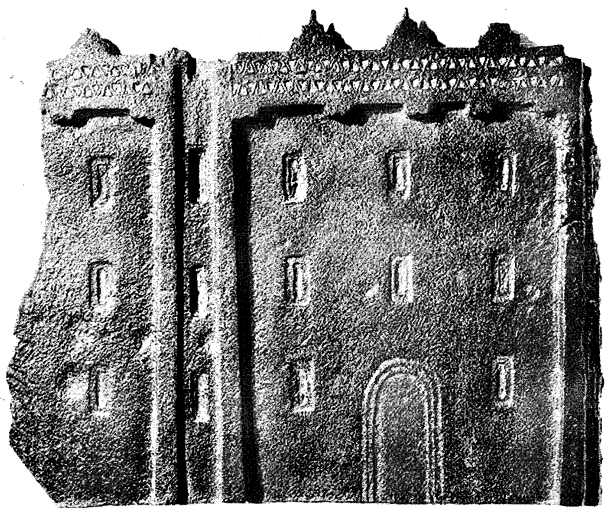

Fig. 21.01. A bronze model, 30.5 cm in height, showing a three-storied Urartian structure found in the vicinity of Van. The battered slope of the structure's walls may be reflected by the way in which the sides of the central buttress narrow towards the top. Note also the relatively clear depiction of pairs of rounded roof beams. Photo courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Then, in 1957, R.D. Barnett took a further look at possible connections between the architecture of Urartu and certain of the characteristic features of the two Achaemenid towers (Barnett 1957b: 74). In his view both the dentils that are found, for example, in the surviving entrance façade of the Zendan-i Suleiman, hereafter the Zendan, at Pasargadae (Fig. 21.02) and 'the vertical slits in the form of windows' that are best preserved in the Ka'bah-i Zardusht, hereafter the Ka'bah (Fig. 21.03), could be traced back to Urartu. Barnett also stressed a possible connection between the ground plans of the Achaemenid towers and the rectangular basalt-clad mud-brick piers with reinforced corners (Fig. 21.04) that had been revealed a few years earlier during the excavations at Karmir Blur (Barnett 1957b: 74). Indeed, even if not all of Barnett's listed parallels remain wholly compelling, they undoubtedly inspired others to begin to look for a broad range of possible connections between the architecture of Urartu and that of Achaemenid Iran.

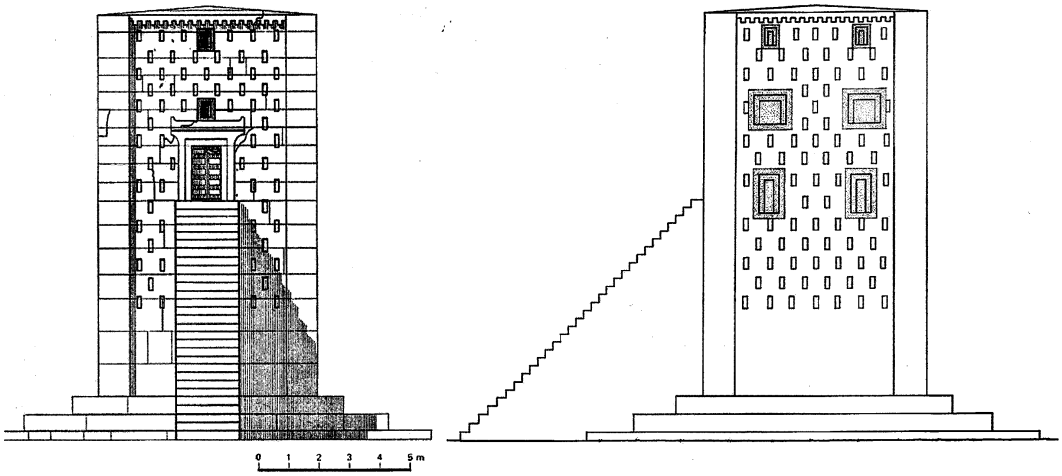

Fig. 21.02 (left). The Zendan, at Pasargadae. A reconstruction of the north-west elevation (after Stronach 1978: fig. 57).
Fig. 21.03 (right). The Ka'bah, at Naqsh-i Rustam. A reconstruction of the west elevation (after Schmidt 1970: fig. 33B).
The exactness of the match between the two towers is reflected, not least, by their respective heights.
Thus, while the Zendan appears to have been 14.09 m high, the Ka'bah is only 3 cm taller.

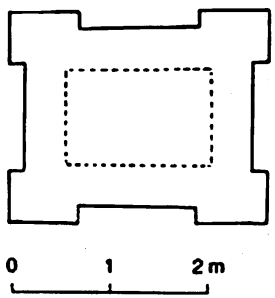

Fig. 21.04. Plan of a rectangular basalt-clad mud-brick pier found at Karmir Blur (after Tiratsy'an 2003b: fig. 2c).

Recognition of a standard form of Urartian temple

Prominent among those who subsequently sought to explore such connections was Gevork Tiracjan [Tiratsy'an], who drew attention, in 1964, to the existence of a more or less uniform type of Urartian temple, even if the precise dimensions of the individual examples could be seen to vary.[1] Taking his cue from the well-preserved ground plan of the thick-walled square temple with buttressed corners, measuring 13.90 × 13.90 m in size, that had recently come to light on the broad summit of Altintepe, Tiracjan was the first to acknowledge the presence of a closely related group of Urartian temples, each with a plan akin to those of the two compact,

[1] Tiratsyan 1964. This pioneering paper, written in Armenian, already covered the main issues that I discussed three years later (Stronach 1967). It remained unknown to me, however, until its subsequent publication, in English in Tiratsy'an 2003b: 23-31.

tall, stone towers in Fars, that included the temple at Altintepe (Fig. 21.05a), that at Toprakkale (Fig. 21.05b), and that at Aznavur, near Patnos (Tiratsy'an 2003b: 26). Aside from remarking on the similar plans of these various structures, he joined Herzfeld and Barnett in comparing the three tiers of windows in the Vannic bronze with the three rows of dark limestone, blind windows in the Ka'bah. Also, with reference to the striking use of light and dark limestone in each of the towers, he pointed to a telling passage in the account of Movses Khorenats'i, written in the fifth century AD or later, when substantial parts of major Urartian buildings were apparently still visible in the vicinity of Van. At a time when such structures were locally attributed to the building activities of 'Shamiram', i.e. to the legendary feats of Semiramis, Khorenats'i noted that 'Shamiram ... built inside the city many exquisite palaces, adorned with various stones and colors, of two and three stories.'[2]

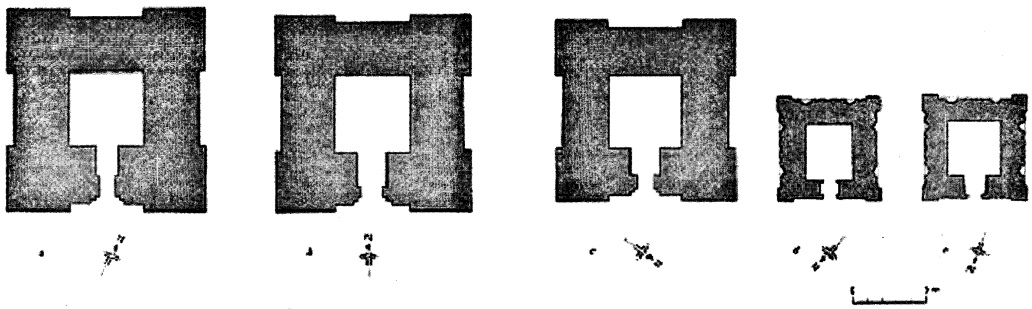

Fig. 21.05. Urartian and Achaemenid tower-like buildings. Plans from (a) Altintepe, (b) Toprakkale, (c) Kayalidere, (d) Pasargadae and (e) Naqsh-i Rustam (after Stronach 1978: fig. 68).

Apart from these observations, Tiracjan associated the light and dark stone elements in the two Achaemenid towers with the 'different colored—light and deep ash-grey—well-worked stones' that characterized the stone platform associated with the temple of Haldi at Toprakkale; he observed that the lowest (and narrowest) of the double-framed blind windows in the two towers could be compared to the narrow windows in the bronze model from the Van region (Fig. 21.01) as well as to the narrow engraved windows in a relief from Kef Kalesi, near Adilcevaz (Fig. 21.06); and he was one of the first to note that, while the regular, squared

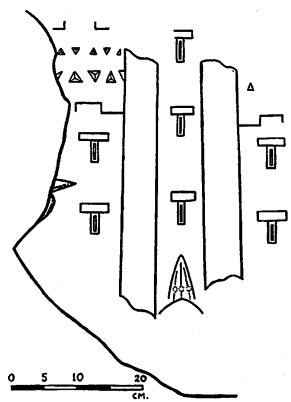

Fig. 21.06. Fragment of an Urartian relief from Kef Kalesi (after Burney & Lawson 1958: fig. 3).

[2] Tiratsy'an 2003b: 28.

dentils in the two towers had been compared to the 'dentils' in the small bronze model in the British Museum by both Herzfeld and Barnett, the extremities of the beams in the latter object were in fact more or less faithful depictions of round, not squared, timbers.[3] He also noted that the basalt 'towers' to which Barnett had alluded were in reality 'pillars' (or, better, piers) that had presumably once supported some kind of superstructure.[4]

While Tiracjan's paper did not dwell on the likely height of the typical Urartian tower-temple or on the question of whether or not the Assyrian representation of the temple of Haldi at Musasir (Fig. 21.07) could conceivably depict a structure of similar tower-like proportions, these were each topics that were beginning to attract attention elsewhere. Wolfram Kleiss was specifically interested, for example, in the possibility that the square rock-cut footprint of the temple at Toprakkale could be reconciled with the celebrated representation of the temple at Musasir (Kleiss 1963-1964). In this context he argued that the low triangular 'gable' in the Assyrian relief could represent the near side of a four-sided tent or pyramidal roof[5] and he went on to provide, in my opinion, a more or less realistic (although perhaps still slightly too squat) impression of the original appearance of a standard Urartian temple (Fig. 21.08). Subsequently Kleiss (1989: 269-271, Abb. 4-5) rejected this reconstruction and proposed alternatives with crenellations.

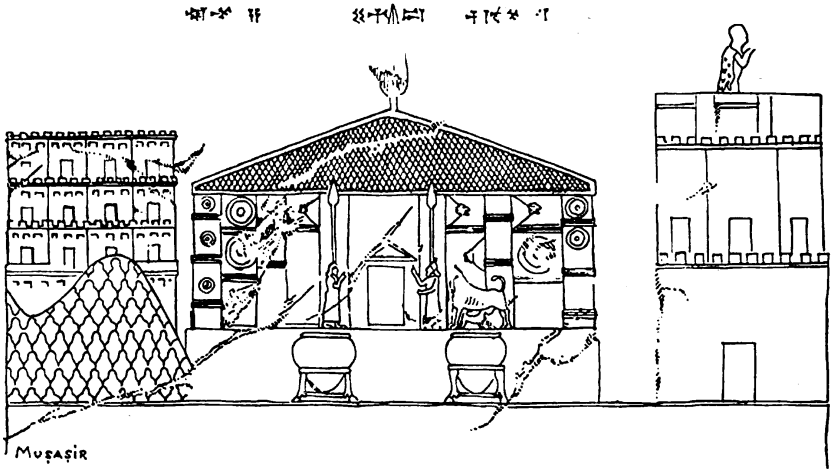

Fig. 21.07. Drawing of a Neo-Assyrian relief of Sargon II, showing the architecture of the temple of Haldi at Musasir (after Herzfeld 1941: fig. 308).

In 1966 the excavator of Altintepe, Tahsin Özgüç, decided to publish his own separate reconstruction (Fig. 21.09). Although he took due note of the thickness of the walls in connection with the once great height of the temple (Özgüç 1966: 41), it has to be said that his reconstruction looks improbable on several counts. Aside from anything else, the rigors of winter in the Urartian highlands would hardly have commended a cella that appears (at least in the drawing) to have been open to the sky. Also, since the lower part of the entrance

[3] A circumstance most clearly demonstrated by a probably associated bronze turret. See especially Barnett 1950: pl. 1a.

[4] Tiratsy'an 2003b: 26. Since 1964 the number of published parallels from Urartu has of course increased. Thus the type of narrow false stone window with an expanded lintel and a strongly projecting, stepped rear profile (Erzen 1988: pl. 9c), which may have been given these specific properties so that it could be mounted in tall mud-brick walls (Cf. Erzen 1988: fig. 22), can now not only be compared to the windows that are indicated in two architectural reliefs from Kef Kalesi (Burney & Lawson 1958: fig. 3; Çilingiroğlu 1997: fig. 32), but also to actual examples of this type of false window, carved from basalt, from Çavuştepe and Armavir (Seidl 1994a: 115-116 with fig. 5). In addition, it is notable that basalt-clad piers with corner buttresses are now also known from Kef Kalesi (Çilingiroğlu 1997: pl. 90) as well from the recently excavated temple courtyard at Ayanis (see below).

[5] A suggestion also put forward by Afif Erzen (1962: 404).

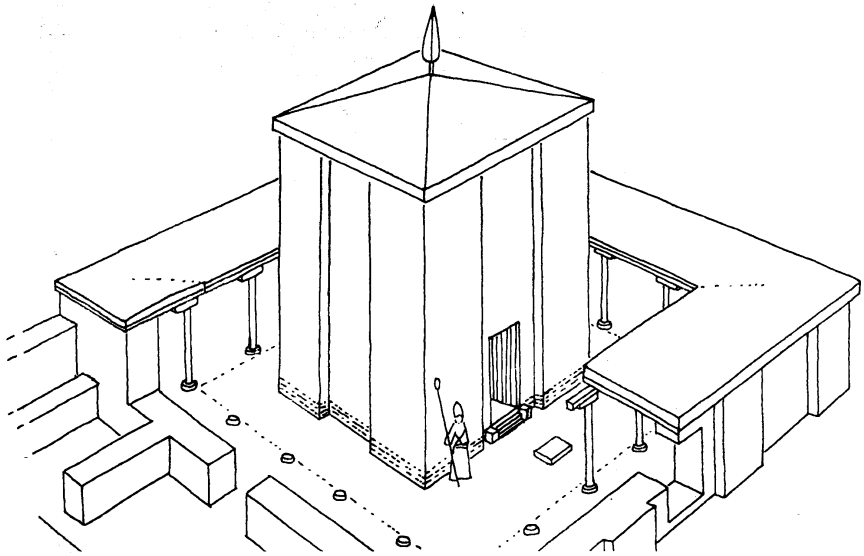

Fig. 21.08. Reconstruction of a standard Urartian temple (after Kleiss 1976a: fig. 27).

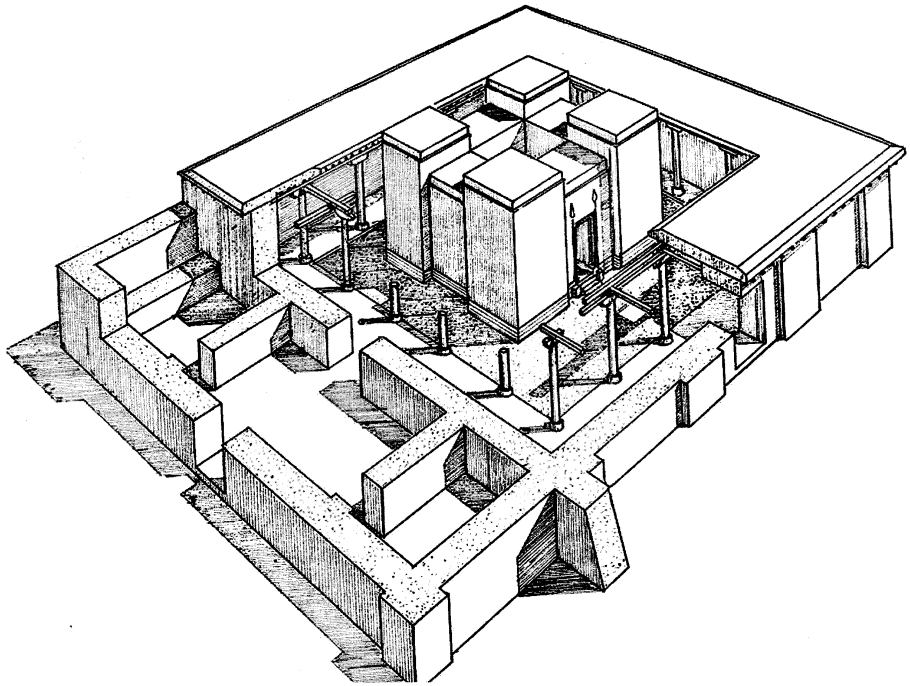

Fig. 21.09. Reconstruction of the temple at Altintepe (after Özgüç 1966: fig. 1).

façade is given special prominence at the expense of the once soaring height of the monument, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that a literal reading of the vertically compressed proportions in the Assyrian likeness of the temple at Musasir was allowed to outweigh other considerations.

The single season of excavations undertaken at Kayalidere in 1965 revealed the existence of a further standard temple and, in the following year, a detailed description of the building was accompanied by various relevant observations. As Seton Lloyd and Charles Burney went out of their way to stress, the squat appearance that was given to the temple at Musasir was almost certainly a direct product of the traditional Assyrian system of depicting all the scenes of a given relief 'between the upper and lower borders of a register' (Burney 1966: 74). In fact, Burney invoked the proportions of the Ka'bah (Fig. 21.03) when he made the point that the overall proportions of the temple at Kayalidere 'may have been those of a double cube' (Burney 1966: 74 with n. 58; cf. also Stronach 1967: 285). Less happy, however, was his conclusion that the roof of the building at Kayalidere could have 'resembled that of the [gabled] tomb of Cyrus at Pasargadae'.[6]

Ayanis and Musasir

Within the past two decades the excavation of the temple of Haldi at Ayanis has provided much new information concerning the diverse appointments of a standard Urartian temple and, remarkably enough, the characteristic features of this relatively intact building – the best preserved temple of Rusa son of Argishti (traditionally Rusa II c. 685-639 BC)—can now be understood to echo many of the documented attributes of the temple of Haldi at Musasir.[7] Indeed, given the decided uniformity of every Urartian temple that is known to have been dedicated to Haldi, including the early example built by Menua (810-786) at Aznavur,[8] it would

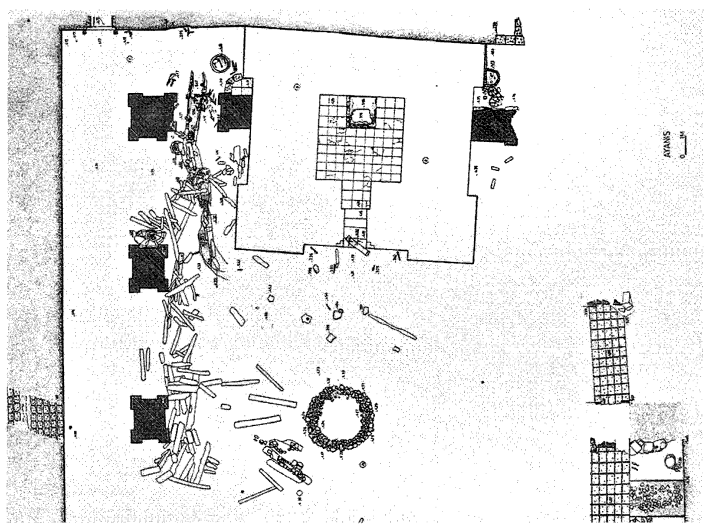

Fig. 21.10. Ayanis. The plan shows the position of the temple set against the rear wall of the court and the location of several of the square piers with buttressed corners that flank the core structure (after Çilingiroğlu 2001: fig. 26).

[6] Burney 1966: 74 with n. 57. Cf. also Barnett's (1957b: 74) surprising assertion that, to judge from the depiction of the temple at Musasir, the tomb of Cyrus 'reproduces the original appearance of an Urartian temple'.

[7] Including the presence of a ceremonial lion-headed shield that appears to have been originally attached to an external wall surface (Çilingiroğlu this volume Chapter 20; 2001b: fig. 26).

[8] Balkan 1960. Cf. also Loon 1966: 48-49 and pls. 4 and 5a.

seem more than likely that each and every temple dedicated to the head of the Urartian pantheon was modeled (as closely as individual topographical circumstances would permit) on the revered prototype located at Musasir. In keeping with this premise, the puzzling 'pilasters', such as were once thought to point to a separate type of temple with an otherwise unparalleled ground plan (Stronach 1967: 282), can now be understood to reflect the Assyrian artist's attempt to represent certain characteristic, freestanding pillar-like elements that directly complemented the fabric of the temple itself.[9] But instead of supposing them to be the heavy pillars of a 'porch' that was associated with the doorway alone,[10] the 'pilasters' in question should now almost certainly be interpreted as representative of the twelve or more buttressed, freestanding piers that were originally used to support a covered gallery or the roof of an arcade – as at Ayanis (Fig. 21.10) – on at least three sides of the core structure.

On the architectural origins of the Zendan

With the foregoing improved understandings of the nature of the standard Urartian temple, such as may once have stood in every major settlement in Urartu, it may be appropriate to offer a fresh appraisal of the choices that came to be made by those who designed the Zendan during the initial period of construction at Pasargadae: an interval that probably began in 544 and ended in 530 BC.[11] Given the fact that tall square towers with buttressed corners, a pyramidal roof, a single room, and a single entrance (often approached by a flight of stairs) are only known to have had an enduring, ubiquitous presence in one polity – that of Urartu – it would seem evident that Cyrus' architects drew their principal inspiration for many of the characteristic features of the Zendan from the spectacular form of temple that honored, *par excellence*, the chief god of the Urartian pantheon. In doing so, however, they eschewed all the normal significations of a sanctuary dedicated to Haldi (such as a permanent podium at the mid-point of the back wall of the immured room, ceremonial shields or ceremonial weapons, cauldrons mounted on tripods, and adjacent roofed galleries).

Instead, in a dramatic departure from the Urartian archetype, the single room was elevated to a height of almost 8m and the frontal staircase was heightened and extended accordingly (Fig. 21.02) (Stronach 1978: 117-129). In line with Cyrus' particular delight in masonry of the highest quality, moreover, each external surface was constructed from fine limestone ashlars, sometimes joined by metal clamps as well as by ubiquitous anathyrosis joints (Fig. 21.11). Such accomplished masonry, with its clear debt to Lydio-Ionian stoneworking traditions of the mid sixth century, was also complemented by distinctive moldings over the doorway that would appear to be of western inspiration (Boardman 2000: 60 with fig. 238a) as well as by carved rosettes of a rare Ionic type on a fragment of an original door leaf which, in Nylander's estimation, ought to have been carved 'between 540 and 530' (Nylander 1970: 141 with fig. 48a). Furthermore, Gevork Tiracjan was clearly justified in drawing attention to the contrast between the irregular, natural appearance of the beam ends that appear in Urartian architectural models of seventh century date and the fully evolved dentils that are one of the hallmarks of the Zendan.

In sum, even if we can still only offer no more than a probable estimate of the main function that was served by the construction of the Zendan (see below), it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the visual qualities of the standard Urartian temple, emended and up-dated in the ways just described, were somehow seen to answer an important dynastic requirement that was not accommodated by any other aspect of the building program of Cyrus at his new capital. More than this, the special needs that called the Zendan into being at Pasargadae clearly remained of equal moment for Darius (522-486 BC) when he elected to erect a new dynastic

[9] An attempt that is only available to us, it should be remembered, through the further filter of a nineteenth century drawing. For notes on the way in which the usually irreproachable artist, Eugène Flandin, partly misrepresented the shape of the freestanding cauldrons in the forecourt of the temple, see also Stronach 1985: 184, n. 17.

[10] A proposal advanced by van Loon (Loon 1966: 42).

[11] For this new date for the beginning of construction, predicated on a date of 545 BC for the fall of Sardis, see Stronach 2008: 168.

capital at Persepolis and therefore the Ka'bah, erected at nearby Naqsh-i Rustam during the second half of the reign of Darius[12] was not allowed – contrary to Darius' otherwise invariable practice – to exhibit anything but a few barely noticeable departures from the original model at Pasargadae.[13]

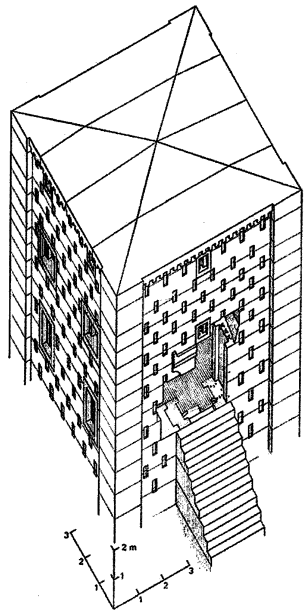

Fig. 21.11. Axonometric partial reconstruction of the upper half of the Zendan showing details of the damaged doorway (after Stronach 1978: fig. 60).

Additional Urartian influences on Achaemenid architecture

By and large Achaemenid architecture stands less in debt to Urartu than has been commonly supposed. Thus, while R. Ghirshman staunchly maintained that the Persians acquired a knowledge of Urartu's advanced stone-working techniques during the time that they lived near Lake Urmia in the eighth century BC, there is neither any proof of a Persian presence in Azerbaijan from the second half of the ninth century down to a moment soon after Sargon II's Eighth Campaign in 714 BC, nor of a subsequent Persian migration from Azerbaijan to Khuzistan (before the Persians supposedly proceeded eastwards to the region of Pasargadae).[14] Nor is there any good reason to connect, as Ghirshman has, the strictly local character of the stone construction at Masjid-i Suleiman and Bard-i Nishandeh (two sites of relatively late date in the southwestern Zagros) with the masonry traditions of Urartu.

[12] Following the detection of multiple toothed chisel marks on the fabric of the tower (personal observation), a date for the start of construction is now generally placed c. 500 BC (cf. Stronach 1978:132) in contrast to Schmidt's assertion that the work began *early* in the reign of Darius (Schmidt 1970: 49). Schmidt 1970: 34-49. Schmidt's proposed date of construction stands slightly revised in Stronach 1978: 130-132.

[13] The Zendan may be viewed, in fact, as a numinous structure that most probably reflected, in its several choice Urartian traits, a strong interest in tower-like construction that could easily have been pervasive within much of the Zagros Highlands in pre-Achaemenid, late Iron Age, times (see below). It also underscored the extra power of *built* rather than natural elevation; and its gleaming all-stone fabric undoubtedly spelled out Cyrus' universal command of the best available masonry, not to mention state-of-the-art decorative stone elements.

[14] For details of Ghirshman's elaborate construct, see, for example, Ghirshman 1950; Ghirshman 1954: 75; and Ghirshman 1964a: 129. *Contra* Ghirshman, see especially Stronach 1974; also, for a new, much more probable location for eighth century Parsua (in the vicinity of the Mahidasht), see Levine 1974: 112 with fig. 2.

Ghirshman also proposed that the highly visible stone terraces and platforms of the Achaemenids owed their introduction to the Persians' earlier acquisition of Urartian stone-working traditions. In particular, he ascribed the tall stone platform on the west flank of the Tall-i Takht at Pasargadae to Cambyses I, the father of Cyrus, on the grounds that it possessed Urartian precedents (cf. Ghirshman 1950 and Ghirshman 1964a: 129-131).

It is true that the Urartians made occasional use of stone platforms of limited size, as at Toprakkale[15] and that they also used rough-bossed masonry with drafted edges – or 'rusticated' masonry – in the context of both exposed and buried foundations. But as van Loon realized in 1966, and as Nylander pointed out in great detail a few years later, it was only those *unfinished* stone blocks with drafted margins and rough quarry-faced centers in the masonry of the Tall-i Takht that could be possibly mistaken for examples of rusticated masonry. The finished blocks in the platform at Pasargadae were characterized, in fact, by *drafted margins and slightly raised, finely pecked central panels* in the manner of the finest mid sixth century masonry from Ionia and Lydia (see Loon 1966: 52 and Nylander 1970: 77-89 with figs. 26 and 27). In many separate particulars, in other words, the huge stone platform that juts out from the west side of the Tall-i Takht, can be directly related to the soaring stone terraces that Croesus introduced at his opulent capital, Sardis.[16]

The extent to which the Urartians were or were not engaged in the construction of multi-rowed columned halls has been a subject of debate for some time. Thus, while Kanetsyan (2001: 149) maintains that 'the forerunners' of the Persian apadana are to be found in Urartu, Gopnik, the author of a recent general study of the columned hall in the Near East, found herself obliged to conclude (at the time that she submitted her paper in 2007), that the Urartians had probably never attempted to construct any columned halls with more than two rows of columns (Gopnik 2010: 201).[17] Indeed, the true nature of the situation has remained obscure for many years due to a lack of pertinent fieldwork.

Today, however, new excavations at Erebuni (Stronach, Thrane et al. 2010) have made it clear that the celebrated thirty-columned hall at Erebuni was founded after the middle of the seventh century BC but before the Achaemenid period. With this evidence in hand, it seems more than likely that the irregularly shaped hall at Armavir (with 32 column bases arranged in four or more rows) is of similar date, and not Achaemenid (Ter-Martirossov 2001: 156). Equally, there would now seem to be every reason to accept the original excavators assessment that the large columned hall with three rows of six columns at Altintepe is in origin also pre-Achaemenid (Özgüç 1966: 44-46), as opposed to Achaemenid (Summers 1993: 93-96). In sum, architects within the wide bounds of what I continue to think of as 'Urartian territory' did in the end experiment with multi-rowed column halls at a moment that post-dates the fall of most of the country's well known citadels in or near 640 BC.

From all available indications, in other words, there is no need to attempt to revise the present broad understanding that various basic features in the sixth century and later columned halls at Pasargadae and Persepolis descend from long-established traditions that flourished, at least in the main, within the present-day borders of western Iran. In this view the ninth century (and earlier) columned halls of Hasanlu, and those that were erected not too long afterwards, not least at such Median sites as Tepe Nush-i Jan and Godin II, either provided the necessary prototypes for those plans that Cyrus favored or, in an alternative scenario, parallel architectural developments in Fars may have provided an early sequence of local columned halls of which we otherwise have no knowledge.[18]

[15] See, conveniently, Loon 1966: fig. 7.

[16] See e.g. Stronach 2008: 153-154, with references.

[17] The excavated structures at Bastam are among those that help to document the all-pervasive nature of long, narrow halls in Urartu throughout at least the first half of the seventh century BC. See e.g. Kleiss 1972a: fig. 6 (for a hall with two rows of piers) and fig. 10 (for a hall with two rows of columns).

[18] Until more is known of the archaeological record in Fars between 1000 and 550 BC, it would be rash to rule out the prospect of the eventual recovery of a complementary sequence of columned halls in the highlands of south-western Iran. If anything, such a prospect is enhanced by the recent discovery of Iranian-related, Iron Age columned halls in south-eastern Arabia. See e.g., Magee 2001: fig. 2.

As far as the second main inspiration for the columned halls at Pasargadae is concerned, this clearly derives from Lydia and Ionia. Influences from this quarter not only extend to the technical apparatus of Lydo-Ionian masonry, but to such very visible elements as horizontally fluted tori and to the introduction of long, double colonnades. In the case of the discontinuous but nevertheless four-sided porticos of Palace S, it is difficult, as Boardman has pointed out, not to think of the continuous double colonnades that already distinguished the four-sided early Ionic dipteral temple; and, as Nylander first observed in 1970, the long garden portico of Palace P recalls many of the characteristics of a Greek stoa (Boardman 2000: 61; Nylander 1970: 118).

These comments are worth keeping in mind, not least since a terminal Urartian or immediately post-Urartian form of portico – short in length and distinguished by only one row of usually four stone column bases (of tufa, and of a new design) – has recently emerged as a useful chronological indication of a perhaps early sixth century BC date in the context, not least, of the extramural settlement on the South-east Hill at Erebuni.[19]

With the signal exception of the restricted uses of black stone in the fabric of the two towers, where the contrast between the dark blind windows and the surrounding light upper walls was almost certainly meant to cite an earlier Urartian effect, the other uses of juxtaposed light and dark stone in Achaemenid Iran would seem to have been chiefly inspired, as Boardman has long maintained, by influences from Ionia (Boardman 1959: 217). Such a conclusion is fortified, not least, by the fact that bichromatic contrasts in Achaemenid palaces are hardly ever encountered after the last fifteen years of the reign of Cyrus during which time the links with Lydo-Ionian stone-working traditions were at their closest.

Finally, the one other distinctive feature that conceivably offers a reflection of earlier Urartian architectural practice in Achaemenid times is again found at Pasargadae. I refer to the type of rectangular pier that stands at each end of the five rows of six columns within the elegant, paved hall of Palace P (Stronach 1978: fig. 40 and pl. 77). In as much as weight-bearing features of this kind are unknown at Hasanlu or at sites in the central western Zagros, let alone in Lydia or Ionia, it certainly does seem possible that Cyrus' architects borrowed the concept of a solid brick pier, clad in stone at its base and covered with plaster elsewhere, from Urartu where examples are known from Kef Kalesi and Ayanis. The introduction of such solid brick supports may well have made sound structural sense; and, since a number of features in the design of Palace P could be read as an allusion to Cyrus' far-flung conquests, some reference to the distinctive architecture of Urartu (beyond that which was clearly detectable in the Zendan) could certainly have been regarded as appropriate.[20]

Urartian influences on Mannean and Median architecture and concluding observations

While it is apparent that the influence of Urartian building practices on Achaemenid architecture as a whole was never as comprehensive as either Herzfeld or Ghirshman once imagined, and while little of the Urartians' special skill in shaping and dressing stone appears to have been passed on to either the Manneans or the Medes, it is nevertheless beginning to emerge that several Urartian features can be detected in the extant built record in both Mannea and Media. With reference to the northern Zagros state of Mannea, it is especially useful to compare the narrow, hump-backed appearance of the hill-top site of Ziviye with the general configuration of say, the formidable seventh century Urartian site of Bastam. And while the flat, rough stone column supports in the columned hall at Ziviye are very similar to the rough stone supports that were let into the floors of the Median columned halls at both Nush-i Jan and Godin, the two rows of nine columns that once graced the columned hall at Ziviye do much to recall the long, double rows of columns or piers that are found, for example, at Bastam (see Mo'tamedi 1997: 165, fig. 62). In addition, a seemingly isolated stone column base

[19] For this tapered, cylindrical form of column base, see Ter-Martirosov 2001a: 156; also Stronach et al. 2009: pl. 5.

[20] As I chose to put matters, in the course of an earlier analysis of the rich mix of possibly borrowed features exhibited in Palace P: 'Oblong piers, not unlike those of the central hall, are known from Urartian sites, internal corner pilasters are found at Tepe Nush-i Jan, and both a fixed throne seat and a thirty-columned hall are represented in the Median complex at Godin Tepe' (Stronach 1978: 104). For the possibility that Cyrus himself campaigned within the former bounds of Urartu as early as 547 BC, see also Stronach 2007.

that stands on the line of the paved ascent that climbs to the summit of Ziviye appears to be of the same distinctive disc-shaped form that is well attested in Urartu (Mo'tamedi 1997: 167, image 2).

The Urartian predilection for narrow halls with two long rows of columns is possibly also reflected as far south as Godin Tepe, where the ceiling of the lone Median hall with a long east-west axis (Hall 6) was at one time supported by two rows of eight columns (Gopnik forthcoming). In addition, a number of traits that are at home in Urartu are also detectable in the innovative and accomplished mud-brick architecture of Tepe Nush-i Jan.

It is manifest, for example, that the Central Temple stands on the summit of the mound and rises directly from bed-rock (Stronach & Roaf 2007: fig. 2.1). On a structural level, note may also be taken of the Temple's tower-like proportions, its buttressed corners, the slightly battered angle of its exterior walls, its single recessed entryway, and the fact that the cella appears to have risen to the full height of the building. Furthermore, the interior of the cella is marked by a number of blind windows and, in terms of the temple's general setting, it is no doubt significant that the always sacrosanct, open space in front of the Temple was flanked by several vaulted *ayvans* (where, in all probability, congregants could take shelter in times of bad weather.[21]

In so far as the Central Temple at Tepe Nush-i Jan has no known close antecedent and, apart from the adjacent and nearly contemporary Old Western Building, no obvious architectural successor, it is in fact worth considering the possibility that the tower-temples of Urartu and other structures of a similar tower-like character in the central Zagros region (Fig. 21.12) emerged from a common architectonic background (cf. also

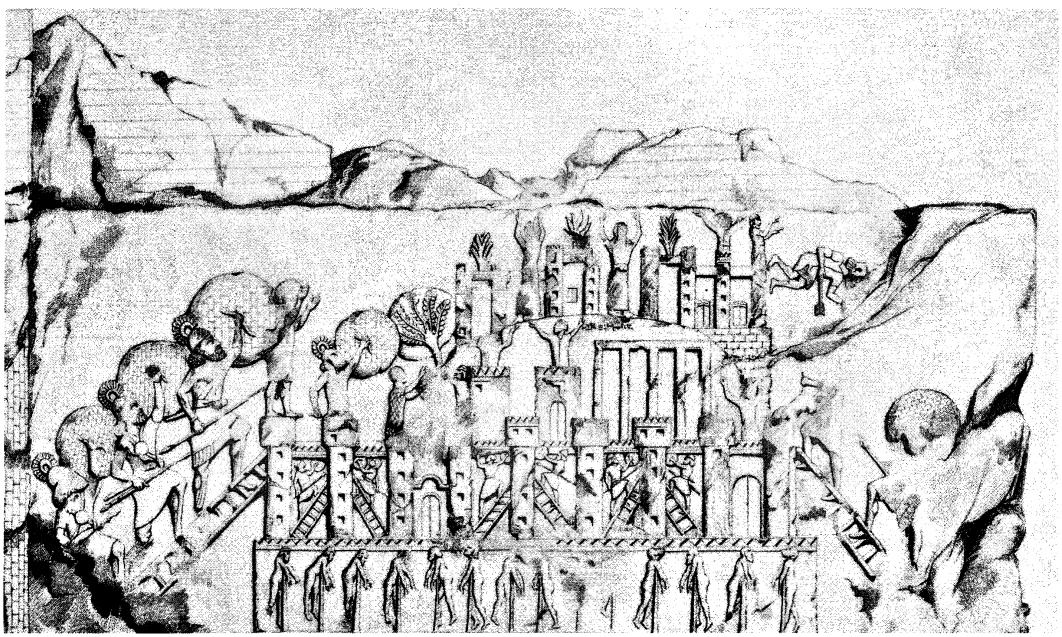

Fig. 21.12. Drawing of a Neo-Assyrian relief of Sargon II showing the architecture of the central Zagros fortress of Harhar (after Roaf 1995: fig. 26, Botta 1849-50 I: pl. 55). As Gunter (1982: 112, n. 36) has remarked, the uppermost structures are likely to represent 'public buildings'. In this context the right-hand tower-like structure with opposed side bays(?) could perhaps be associated with a stepped plan akin to that of the Central Temple at Tepe Nush-i Jan.

[21] For the possibly similar role of the covered galleries at Ayanis, see Çilingiroğlu 2001b: 44. Also, with reference to the 'double corner buttresses' that occur on the east pier in the north row of piers at Ayanis (Çilingiroğlu 2001b: fig. 26), it is of interest that a parallel arrangement distinguishes each corner of the Columned Hall and the Fort at Nush-i Jan.

Tourovets 2005: 365 and Shenkar 2007: 172). From this perspective both the form of tower-temple that emerged at Musasir (itself in the northern Zagros) and the rather different type of carefully ventilated temple that stands on the highest available location at Nush-i Jan, should probably be viewed as separate offshoots from a more or less common building tradition.

It is possible, moreover, that in erecting the tower at Pasargadae, Cyrus not only wished to acknowledge the prior, sacred architecture of the pan-Zagros region (which had already been used, at least in the heart of Media, to honor an early stratum of Iranian religion), but that, in this one instance, he deliberately chose to cite an especially memorable type of building from Urartu. That is to say that if Cyrus chanced to learn (in the course of any visit he may have made to the erstwhile territory of the Urartians) of the extent to which successive kings of Urartu had looked to the sanctity of the tower-temple at Musasir in order to validate their rule, he could have decided that a durable all-stone structure of similar character, enhanced by new, masterly invocations of height, could serve his own dynastic line equally well. To this degree, the present review of Urartu's impact on Iranian architecture could suggest that, above all else, the Zendan and the Ka'bah were each built, by Cyrus and Darius respectively, as symbols (and places) of legitimate investiture for their respective royal lines.[22] This finding also lends support, I submit, to the broad proposal that the two towers served as 'coronation towers' perhaps not only in Achaemenid times but also, as the early *frataraka* coinage would seem to suggest (with particular reference to the Ka'bah) for some time thereafter.[23]

[22] There may also be an indirect reflection of this circumstance in the interest that Alexander took in the tomb of Cyrus (Strabo Geog. 15.3.7) at the time of his initial visit to Pasargadae early in 330 BC. It is certainly logical to suppose that Alexander was acquainted with the repute of Pasargadae as the place where the 'mysteries' of each Persian coronation took place (Plutarch, Artaxerxes 3.1); and, even if the Zendan's original role (as the locus that served to legitimate any change of rule in Iran) only appears to have been reinstated by Artaxerxes II (404-359 BC), any thoughts that Alexander might have had concerning a possible future coronation in the Persian heartland would probably have urged him to take a close look at all the major appointments in Cyrus' capital. For further discussion, see especially Badian 1996: 23 and Stronach 2000: 692-694.

[23] For a number of points that accord with the present, chiefly Urartian inspired interpretation (although the authors in question make no appeal to Urartian evidence *per se*), see Frye 1974: 386, Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1983, and Boucharlat 2003. Also, for entirely appropriate reservations concerning both Sancisi-Weerdenburg's improbably long list of the possible functions of the two towers and my own erstwhile insistence that all the structures depicted on the coins of the *frataraka* rulers of Fars had to be, without exception, altars (Stronach 1966: 221), see now Potts 2007: 287-297.

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Abbreviations

AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AHw	W. von Soden 1965-1981. *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, Wiesbaden
AMI	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran*
AMIT	*Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran und Turan*
BAR IS	British Archaeological Reports International Series
CAD	A.L. Oppenheim & E. Reiner (eds.) 1956-. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Chicago-Glückstadt
CTN 5	H.W.F. Saggs 2001. *The Nimrud Letters, 1952*, Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud V, British School of Archaeology in Iraq, London
CTU	M. Salvini 2008. *Corpus dei testi urartei* Vols. 1-3. *Le iscrizioni su pietra e roccia*, Documenta Asiana 8, Rome
HchI	F.W. König 1955-1957. *Handbuch der chaldischen Inschriften*, AfO Beiheft 8, Graz
IFŽ	*Istoriko-filologičeskij Žurnal [Historical-Philological Journal] Patma-Banasirakan Handes*, Yerevan
I.N.	*Ivories from Nimrud*
IstMitt	*Istanbuler Mitteilungen*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
PNA	*The Prosopography of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*
RlA	*Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie*
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAA 1	S. Parpola 1987. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part I. Letters from Assyria and the West*, SAA 1, Helsinki
SAA 4	I. Starr 1990. *Queries to the Sun God: Divination and Politics in Sargonid Assyria*, SAA 4, Helsinki
SAA 5	G.B. Lanfranchi & S. Parpola 1990. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part II. Letters from the Northern and Northeastern Provinces*, SAA 5, Helsinki
SAA 7	F.M. Fales & J.N. Postgate 1992. *Imperial Administrative Records, Part I: Palace and Temple Administration*, SAA 7, Helsinki
SAA 11	F.M. Fales & J.N. Postgate 1995. *Imperial Administrative Records, Part II: Provincial and Military Administration*, SAA 11, Helsinki
SAA 15	A. Fuchs & S. Parpola 2001. *The Correspondence of Sargon II, Part III. Letters from Babylonia and the Eastern Provinces*, SAA 15, Helsinki
SAA 16	M. Luukko & G. Van Buylaere 2002. *The Political Correspondence of Esarhaddon*, SAA 16, Helsinki
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies

Sg 8 Sargon's Letter to the God Ashur. For the text see W. Mayer 1983. Sargons Feldzug gegen Urartu – 714 v. Chr., Text und Übersetzung, *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* 115: 65-132

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UPD I.M. D'jakonov, 1963. *Urartskie pis'ma i dokumenty* [*Urartian letters and documents*], Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, Moskva - Leningrad

VDI *Vestnik Drevnej Istorii [Messenger of Ancient History]*

ZA *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie*

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